DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 304 781 EA 020 803

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TITLE The Effective Schools Movement: Its History and Context. An SEDL Monograph.
INSTITUTION Southwest Educational Development Lab., Austin, Tex.
PUB DATE Aug 87
NOTE 23p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; *Educational History; *Educational Improvement; Educational Quality; *Educational Research; Educational Trends; Elementary Secondary Education; *School Effectiveness
IDENTIFIERS *Effective Schools Movement; *Lezotte (Larry)

ABSTRACT

This document traces the development of the effective schools movement from its early beginning in the late 1960's. A framework for this history, in the form of Larry Lezotte's "four critical periods," is described. Using Lezotte's framework of dates (1966-76, 1976-80, 1980-83, and 1983-present), this paper examines major events of and influences on the movement; some key concepts, terms, and definitions that are frequently encountered in the literature are reviewed; and some of the important studies relevant to each of the periods are identified and discussed in light of their characteristics and contributions to the effective schools research. Included is a brief discussion of attempts to apply the findings of the "school effects" research to the improvement of student achievement. Concluding the paper is a series of questions and concerns that have lingered or are emerging as the movement gains attention and acceptance. (SI)

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The Effective Schools Movement: Its History and Context

An SEDL Monograph
by
Betty Mace-Matluck

August, 1987

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THE EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS MOVEMENT: ITS HISTORY AND CONTEXT

Betty J. Mace-Matluck

The Effective Schools Movement responds to the premise that "Society expects schools to teach all students the basic skills" (Gauthier, 1986). The public demands, and rightly so, that schools be effective in providing all students with those essential skills needed to become contributing members of our society. With mounting evidence that significant numbers of U.S. citizens emerge from schooling without such skills, making schools more effective for all students has become an overarching challenge facing today's educators.

Gauthier, W. Jr. (1986, November). School improvement: State perspective. Paper presented at the Regional School Improvement Meeting for Demonstration School Sites. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, Austin, Texas.

Schools across the country, often spurred by legislated reforms and/or coaxed by state departments of education, have accepted the challenge by designing and implementing "effective school programs" or "school improvement projects" based on what has become known generically as the "effective schools research." That research, and the guidance it offers for school improvement efforts, have become "hot" items.

In its efforts to support school improvement as a regional educational laboratory, Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) has been systematically examining and applying the "effective schools literature," one product being a two-volume set of materials (Mace-Matluck, 1986a; 1986b) developed as a reference for school personnel launching school improvement efforts.

Mace-Matluck, B. J. (1986a). *Research-based strategies for bringing about successful school improvement.* Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

Mace-Matluck, B. J. (1986b). *Research-based tools for bringing about successful school improvement.* Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

As SEDL researchers began production of this two-volume reference, the challenge of organizing and synthesizing the so-called "effective schools literature" proved much greater than anticipated. There was no consensus in the field about the parameters of this literature; so parameters had to be drawn, defining what might be included.

There was also considerable variation in how people seemed to be defining such terms as "school improvement efforts" and effective schools "projects" or "programs." A

particular difficulty lay in the distinctions between "correlates" of effective schools as opposed to "characteristics" of effective schools as opposed to "variables associated with" effective schools. Debate surrounded the issue of what is an acceptable "measure" of a school's effectiveness, and further, how one defines an "effective" school -- or an "ineffective" school, for that matter.

Rightly or wrongly, SEDL staff set parameters, defining what represented "the literature," and information was gleaned that promised to be most useful for school personnel to have at their fingertips when designing and implementing a school improvement project based on the effective schools research. A spin-off from that effort was an enhanced understanding of the context and history of this research and its literature -- an understanding that has its own benefit of perspective for planners or practitioners who seek to implement an "effective school" program. That context and history is the topic for this paper.

This document traces the development of the Effective Schools Movement from its early beginning in the late 1960s. A useful framework for this history, in the form of "four critical periods," has been described by Larry Lezotte (1986). Using Lezotte's framework of dates, this paper examines major events of and influences on the movement; some key concepts, terms, and definitions that are frequently encountered in the literature are reviewed; and some of the important studies relevant to each of the periods are identified and discussed in light of their characteristics and contributions to the effective schools research. Included also is a brief discussion of attempts to apply the findings of the "school effects" research to the improvement of student achievement. Concluding the paper is a series of questions and concerns that have lingered or are emerging as the Effective Schools Movement has gained wide-spread attention and acceptance.

Lezotte, L. W. (1986, April). School effectiveness: Reflections and future directions. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, California. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 274 047)

Lezotte (1986) has identified four "critical" periods that mark the epochs of the Movement's evolution: 1966-76, 1976-80, 1980-83, and 1983-present. Examining the literature lying between each of these milestones, we can form a picture of what the Movement is and isn't, where it came from and is going, what is solid and what is unknown.

1966-1976

The first critical period spans 10 years whose major events included input/output equity studies, the first searches for effective schools, and outlier studies.

Input/Output Equity Studies

Early inspiration for the Effective Schools Movement can be said to lie in a group of studies that attempted to examine whether school resources (e.g., ratio of adults to children; number of books in the library) were associated with student outcomes (typically, performance on standardized achievement tests). This research can be generically described as input/output equity studies. Most notable among these are the well-known Coleman study (Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mood, Weinfield, & York, 1966) and another by Jencks and his colleagues at Harvard (Jencks, Smith, Ackland, Bane, Cohen, Gintis, Heyns, & Michelson, 1972).

Coleman, J. S., Campbell, E. O., Hobson, C. J., McPartland, J., Mood, A. M., Weinfield, F. D., & York, R. L. (1966). *Equality of Educational Opportunity*. Washington, DC: U. S. Office of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics.

Jencks, C. S., Smith, M., Ackland, H., Bane, M. J., Cohen, D., Gintis, H., Heyns, B., & Michelson, S. (1972). *Inequality: A reassessment of the effect of family and schooling in America*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

In 1964 Congress passed the "Civil Rights Act," which sought to ensure equal rights of all citizens, including equality of educational opportunity in public schools. In conjunction with the Civil Rights Act, Congress provided funding under which James Coleman and his colleagues conducted a national "Equal Educational Opportunity Survey." The object was to assess the distribution of educational resources by race and, based on these descriptive data, assess equality of educational opportunity in public schools. The results, released in 1966, included many findings that enjoyed wide public acceptance but which actually proved detrimental to advancing educational equity for poor and minority students.

First, the report stated that educational resources available to black students closely matched those available to white students, thereby suggesting greater parity among schools than was thought. The report also stated that, in spite of availability of similar educational resources, black student performance was considerably below that of white students. The notion was advanced that student family background was largely responsible for the difference. Coleman's report made a similar observation about performance differences between affluent and poor students.

Taken together, these findings seemed to suggest that student performance is more directly related to conditions outside the control of the school than to those within the purview of the school. Note this statement from the Coleman report:

> ... schools bring little influence to bear on a child's achievement that is independent of his background and general social context; ... this very lack of an independent effect means that the inequalities imposed on children by their home, neighborhood, and peer environment are carried along to become the inequalities with which they confront adult life at the end of school. For equality of educational opportunity through the schools must imply a strong effect of schools that is independent of the child's immediate social environment, and that strong independent effect is not present in American schools. (Coleman, et al., 1966, p. 325)

Supporting the Coleman findings was a study conducted by Jencks and a group of Harvard colleagues that was reported in 1972 under the title, *Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America*. Essentially this study concluded that educational inequities in the United States are not the source of inequality of income and social class. Note one of their summarizing statements:

> We cannot blame economic inequality on differences between schools, since differences between schools seem to have very little effect on any measurable attribute of those who attend them. (Jencks, et al., 1972, p. 8)

Do Effective Schools Exist?

In challenge to this predominant view that "schools don't and can't make a difference," the question surfaced: "Do effective schools exist?" A search was begun to identify such schools, and the first effective schools studies were launched. Some were even reported during this period.

While acknowledging that family background contributes to student achievement levels (i.e., evidence based on test results does show that children from middle- and upper-middle class families do demonstrate achievement levels above those of children from poor families), some educational researchers disagreed with the assumption that family background determines the child's capacity to learn. They held the premise that, if school resources are

used effectively, every child can master basic skills and schools can be successful in teaching all children.

Good and Brophy (1985), summarized the reasoning like this: "Student progress clearly varies from school to school, but the real question is whether this variation in achievement among schools is affected by *school process* or whether this variation can be explained completely in terms of student factors (e.g., aptitude)." (p. 7)

Good, T. L., & Brophy, J. E. (1985). *School effects.* (Occasional Paper No. 77). East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University, The Institute for Research on Teaching.

It was argued that if some meaningful variation can be found in performance among schools, then it follows that student performance in schools can be improved. Moreover, researchers and practitioners could cite examples of individual schools where virtually all students were successfully learning what it was that these schools wanted them to know and to be able to do.

One early team of researchers challenging the input/output studies was Klitgaard and Hall (1974), who pointed to a number of methodological problems in the work of Coleman's group and others. Klitgaard and Hall maintained that, because the input/output studies examined the average effect of all schools in a sample on student outcomes, they measured only general effects. Effectiveness of an individual school could be masked. Therefore, they argued, there could be some unusually effective individual schools.

Klitgaard, R. E., & Hall, G. R. (1974). Are there unusually effective schools? *Journal of Human Resources, 74,* 90-106.

Accordingly, Klitgaard and Hall set out, along with other colleagues, to explore the question, "Do effective schools exist?" Their 1974 report is important for historical as well as substantive reasons: it was the first rigorous, large-scale effort to identify effective schools.

In their quest, Klitgaard and Hall used student performance on standardized reading and mathematics achievement tests as their measure of school effectiveness. They analyzed three large data sets: one from the state of Michigan, another from New York City, and the 1960 Project Talent high school data. With student background factors controlled statistically, they found schools in which students consistently achieved at higher-than-average levels. The data also revealed unusually effective school *districts*.

Although Klitgaard and Hall were able to demonstrate that some unusually effective schools exist, their results were similar to previous research in revealing that the effects of schools are small after non-school factors (e.g., socio-economic status, aptitude) are controlled. The high-achieving schools identified represented only 2% to 9% of the sample. However, the identified schools were clearly more effective than other schools with similar populations.

While the big issue of whether effective schools exist got a definite nod, Klitgaard and Hall's work surfaced two key questions that still linger unresolved: Is student performance on standardized achievement tests an appropriate measure of school effectiveness? How high does a school have to score on such measures to be considered "effective?" Recall that this study used standardized achievement tests of reading and mathematics as the student-outcome measure. Their criterion for effectiveness was one standard deviation (or more) above the mean more often than chance would predict.

Another important study of this early period was conducted by George Weber and reported in 1971. Weber sought to identify effective inner-city schools serving poor student populations and to examine processes operating in successful inner-city schools. To identify successful schools, Weber used a nomination process. From 95 nominated schools, he selected four for case study: two in Manhattan, one in Kansas City, and one in Los Angeles. He found several factors that were common to the four:

Weber, G. (1971). *Inner-city children can be taught to read: Four successful schools*. Washington, DC: Council for Basic Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 057 125)

- Strong leadership (in three cases it was the principal, in the other it was the area superintendent);
- High expectations (school staff held high expectations with regard to school achievement of inner-city children);
- Orderly climate (school climate was characterized by order, a sense of purpose, relative quiet, and pleasure in learning);
- Careful evaluation of pupil progress; and

- Stress on reading (his outcome measure focused on reading).

At this early point, factors such as leadership, expectations, school climate, and monitoring of pupil progress were being associated with "effective" schools.

Outlier studies

Another feature of this first period were "outlier" studies, in which a statistical procedure is used to identify schools in a sample whose overall scores fall at the outlying extremes of the sample -- e.g., at the highest end of a given spectrum (high-achieving schools) and at the lowest end (low-achieving schools). Characteristics of these outlier schools are then assessed by surveys or case studies to determine reasons for the schools' outcomes. Studies adopting this approach in the 1970s included three by the New York State Department of Education (1974a, 1974b, 1976); another conducted by the Maryland State Department of Education (Austin, 1978); Lezotte, Edmonds, and Ratner's (1974) examination of the model cities elementary schools in Detroit; and a study of the Delaware schools (Spartz, Valdes, McCormick, Meyers, & Geppert, 1977).

The results of these outlier studies are amazingly consistent. The most common elements of effective schools across these investigations were reported to be better control or discipline and high staff expectations for student achievement.

The outlier studies varyied in quality, with most suffering from some weaknesses. Most included only a narrow and relatively small sample of extensively studied schools; careful control for student background differences was often not present; and, as in the case of input/output studies, achievement data were aggregated at the school level. Unfortunately, the outlier studies did not typically examine achievement data for different subsets of students within a given school. Further, these studies have been criticized for comparing "effective" schools with "ineffective" schools, no attention being given to comparisons with "average" schools. Finally, addressing the issue of equity, concern has been raised about the subjectivity surrounding

New York State Department of Education. (1974a, March). *Reading achievement related to educational and environmental conditions in 12 New York City elementary schools*. Albany, NY: Division of Education and Evaluation.

New York State Department of Education. (1974b). *School factors influencing reading achievement: A case study of two inner city schools*. Albany, NY: Office of Education Performance Review. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 089 211)

New York State Department of Education. (1976). *Three strategies for studying the effects of school process*. Albany, NY: Bureau of School Programs Evaluation.

Austin, G. R. (1978). *Process evaluation: A comprehensive study of outliers*. Baltimore, MD: Maryland Department of Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 160 644)

Lezotte, L. W., Edmonds, R., & Ratner, G. (1974). *A final report: Remedy for school failure to equitable basic school skills*. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University, Department of Urban and Metropolitan Studies.

Spartz, J. L., Valdes, A. L., McCormick, W. J., & Geppert, W. J. (1977). *Delaware educational accountability system case studies: Elementary schools grades 1-4*. Dover, DE: Delaware Department of Public Instruction.

the criteria used for determining school success. The "effective schools" examined were those whose aggregate achievement data were highest among the sample studied, but they may not have been high-achieving schools when compared to even "average" schools in another sample.

As the 1966-1976 period came to a close, researchers were assured that, though few in number, effective schools do indeed exist. The question then became, "Can schools change and become more effective?" This question became a central concern of the next critical time period: 1976-1980.

1976-1980

Major events and influences of the period, 1976-1980, included case studies, program evaluation studies, the formation of coalitions of researchers and practitioners to improve schools, and the emergence of definitions of effective schools.

Case studies

In the latter half of the 1970s, the effective schools research methodology shifted to case studies. Among the most-cited are investigations by Brookover and colleagues at Michigan State (1979), Brookover and Lezotte (1979), Rutter and colleagues from England (1979), the California State Department of Education (1980), Glenn (1981), Levine & Stark (1981), and Venezky & Winfield (1981).

Although quality varied among the case studies, those cited above (and others of the period) were criticized for the same general weaknesses associated with the outlier studies. Nonetheless, their data supported and extended the findings from research using other methodologies. Common to most, but not all, of the "effective" schools in these case studies were the following characteristics:

- Strong leadership by the principal or other staff
- High expectations by staff for student achievement
- A clear set of goals and an emphasis for the school
- An effective, schoolwide staff training program

Brookover, W. B., Beady, C., Flood, P., Schweitzer, J., & Wisenbaker, J. (1979). *School social systems and student achievement: Schools can make a difference.* New York, NY: Praeger.

Brookover, W. B., & Lezotte, L. W. (1979). *Changes in school characteristics coincident with changes in student achievement.* East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University, The Institute for Research on Teaching. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 181 005)

Rutter, M., Maughan, B., Mortimore, P., Ouston, J., & Smith, A. (1979). *Fifteen thousand hours: Secondary schools and their effects on children.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

California State Department of Education. (1980). *Report on the special studies of selected ECE schools with increasing and decreasing reading scores: A report to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee and the Fiscal and Policy Committees of the Legislature as required by Item 283 of the Supplemental Language to the 1977-78 Budget Act.* Sacramento, CA: Office of Program Evaluation and Research. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 188 106)

Glenn, B. C. (1981). *What works? An examination of effective schools for poor black children.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Center for Law and Education.

Levine, D. U., & Stark, J. (1981, August). *Extended summary and conclusions: Institutional and organizational arrangements and processes for improving academic achievement at inner city elementary schools.* Kansas City, MO: University of Missouri, Center for the Study of Metropolitan Problems in Education.

Venezky, R. L., & Winfield, L. F. (1979). *Schools that succeed beyond expectations in reading.* (Studies on Education Technical Report No. 1). Newark, DE: University of Delaware. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 177 484)

- A system for monitoring student progress

Order and discipline also were found to be important in a few of the studies. Typically, several factors were found to be specific for any given study, depending on the variables being examined.

Program evaluation studies

A third type of school effectiveness research emerged in the late 1970s in the form of program evaluation studies. These included program evaluations reporting on the consequences of variations in school-level factors. Typical of the program evaluation efforts were:

- A study of 20 Los Angeles schools participating in a special program to improve reading (Armor, Conry-Osequera, Cox, King, McDonnell, Pascal, Pauly, & Zellman, 1976);
- A study of a national sample of compensatory reading programs carried out by the Educational Testing Service (Trismen, Waller, & Wilder, 1976); and
- Three studies in Michigan intended to determine characteristics of schools with effective compensatory education programs (Hunter, 1979).

From a methodological standpoint, the program evaluation studies were generally stronger and included much larger samples than did the outlier and case studies. Interestingly, despite differing research methodologies, the identified characteristics of an "effective" school in these program evaluations were strikingly similar to those from the previous two types of research.

Coalitions of Researchers and Practitioners

In addition to the wealth of research carried out during the latter half of the 70s, a signification transition was occurring toward the application of effective schools research. A coalition of effective schools researchers and school-based practitioners began to form with the object of improving schools. A number of well-known school im-

Armor, D., Conry-Oseguera, P., Cox, M., King, N., McDonnell, L., Pascal, A., Pauly, E., & Zellman, G. (1976). *Analysis of the school preferred reading program in selected Los Angeles minority schools*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 130 243)

Trismen, D., Waller, M., & Wilder, G. (1976). *A descriptive and analytic study of compensatory reading programs: Final report* (Vol. 2). Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 190 613)

Hunter, M. G. (1979). *Final report of the Michigan cost-effectiveness study*. East Lansing, MI: Michigan Department of Education.

provement programs were planned and implemented. Ron Edmonds' work with the New York City schools was of particular importance, as it was not only one of the earliest efforts at applying the effective schools research to school improvement at the local level but it also provided a model for others. Subsequently, a number of noteworthy school improvement programs were undertaken in Connecticut, Michigan, Milwaukee, and St. Louis, among other places.

The early work of the Effective Schools Movement was so enthusiastically received that few, if any, state departments of education have not become involved in school-improvement efforts based on the effective schools research, and the term "effective schools literature" has become current in literally thousands of schools and school districts across the nation. This is undoubtedly one of the most frequent topics in educational journals, and it has been a very popular topic on conference agendas as well.

In spite of such widespread use, however, the term "effective schools literature" lacks a clear definition. Some limit the definition to include only research focused on "exceptional schools" – that is, research that has examined school-level effects on student achievement. Others argue for a broader definition.

For the purpose of informing its school-improvement efforts, SEDL has elected to encompass, at a minimum, three large bodies of research under the rubric of "effective schools literature": (a) the *school effects* research, which is the primary focus of this document, (b) the research on teaching (*teacher effects* research), and (c) the *educational change* research. A comprehensive definition should also include a fourth body of literature, the research on *organizational management*, which has only in recent years begun to receive attention from educators.

Definition/description of an effective school

During the period between 1976-1980 a definition and description of an effective school began to evolve. While the definition details differ from one researcher (or study) to another, there seems to be commonality among the key ingredients of an effective school: a student achievement focus, an emphasis on *all* students, and a goal

of mastery of basic skills. After considering various available alternatives, Mace-Matluck (1986a) offered a composite of definitions commonly found in the literature:

> An effective school is one in which the conditions are such that student achievement data show that all students evidence an acceptable minimum mastery of those essential basic skills that are prerequisite to success at the next level of schooling. (p. 5)

As the 1980s began, critics of the effective schools research and of the concepts associated with it began to organize their responses, thereby ushering in the next critical time period.

1980-1983

The time period of 1980-1983 was crucial, encompassing criticism, competition, and growth. Its major features included syntheses of the literature and the advent of the Excellence Movement.

Syntheses of the Effective Schools Literature

During the period between 1980 and 1983, several summarizations, syntheses, and critical reviews of the effective schools literature were completed. Ron Edmonds, in his well-known summarizations (1979a, 1979b, 1981), maintained that there are five correlates of effective schools:

- The leadership of the principal is characterized by substantial attention to the quality of instruction;
- There is a pervasive and broadly understood instructional focus;
- An orderly, safe climate exists that is conducive to teaching and learning;
- Teacher behaviors convey the expectation that all students are to obtain at least minimum mastery; and
- Pupil achievement is used as the measure for program evaluation.

Edmonds, R. R. (1979a). Effective schools for the urban poor. *Educational Leadership*, 37, 15-27.

Edmonds, R. R. (1979b). Some schools work and more can. *Social Policy*, 9, 28-32.

Edmonds, R. R. (1981). Making public schools effective. *Social Policy*, 12, 56-60.

Note that Edmonds used the word "correlate." He argued that each of the above ingredients is related to each of the others, that they are interactive, and they are all present in an effective school.

Although other reviewers have examined basically the same literature, they did not always find the same set of features to be characteristic of effective schools, and somewhat different lists are offered. While sharing many features, the number of features varies (e.g., Tomlinson, 1980; Austin, 1979; 198l; Phi Delta Kappa, 1980; Purkey & Smith, 1983). Typically, reviewers and synthesizers other than Edmonds used the terms "characteristics" or "variables" when writing of factors associated with effective schools. The term "correlates" appears most often in the work of Edmonds or in reference to his work.

In their often-cited review, Purkey and Smith (1983) identified two sets of "variables" that, taken together, "define the climate and culture of the school." Based on their review of the effective schools research, implementation research, school organization theory and research, and other related literature, Purkey and Smith offered a tentative portrait of an effective school. They described the school as a system of "nested layers" in which the outer layer, the school, sets the context for the adjacent inside layer, the classroom. They used the same image to describe the components of an effective school:

> While the characteristics are interdependent, certain ones seem logically to form a framework within which the others function. The framework or first group is composed of organizational and structural variables that can be set into place by administrative and bureaucratic means. They precede and facilitate the development of the second group of variables. The second group of variables can be labeled, somewhat loosely, as 'process variables.' Taken together these variables define the climate and culture of the school -- characteristics that need to grow organically in a school and are not directly susceptible to bureaucratic manipulation. (p. 443)

The nine organizational and structural variables and four process variables defined by Purkey and Smith are shown below in Exhibit 1 as summarized by Mace-Matluck (1986a).

Tomlinson, T. M. (1980, May). Student ability, student background and student achievement: Another look at life in effective schools. Paper presented at the Educational Testing Service Conference on Effective Schools, New York, NY.

Austin, G. R. (1979, April). An analysis of outlier exemplary schools and their distinguishing characteristics. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.

Austin, G. R. (1981). *Exemplary schools and their identification*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Maryland, Center for Educational Research and Development, Baltimore, MD.

Phi Delta Kappa. (1980). *Why do some urban schools succeed?* Bloomington, IN: Author.

Purkey, S. C., & Smith, M. S. (1983). Effective schools: A review. *Elementary School Journal, 83* (4), 427-452.

Exhibit 1
Organizational/Structural and Process Variables
Related to Effective Schools

Organizational-Structural Variables

SCHOOL-SITE MANAGEMENT:
A considerable amount of responsibility is given to each school to determine the exact means by which to address the problem of increasing academic performance.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP:
Leadership from either the principal, another administrator, or a group of teachers is necessary to initiate and maintain the improvement process. Effective school leaders emphasize achievement, set instructional strategies, ensure an orderly atmosphere, frequently evaluate student progress, coordinate instructional programs, and support teachers.

STAFF STABILITY:
In a successful school, further success is promoted if the staff remains together. Frequent transfers are likely to retard, if not prevent, the growth of a coherent and ongoing personality, especially in the early phases of the change process.

CURRICULUM ARTICULATION AND ORGANIZATION:
A planned, coordinated curriculum increases the amount of time students are engaged in studying basic skills and other academic subjects. At all levels of the school process (district, school, and classroom), the three basic elements of the curriculum (objectives, instruction and materials, and assessment) are aligned to ensure maximum learning and valid assessment of school effectiveness.

SCHOOLWIDE STAFF DEVELOPMENT:
Staff development is ongoing and long term. It is building-based, developmental, and comprehensive, rather than specific to individual teachers, and is strongly linked to the school's instructional and organizational needs. It is tied to building, or school, goals and has strong support from the principal, as reflected by personal involvement in the staff development activities.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT:
Parents are informed of school goals and student responsibilities, especially with regard to homework. Their involvement and support is likely to positively influence student academic achievement through increased student motivation. It is not the overall amount but the type of parent participation that affects student achievement. However, one kind of participation begets another. Where there are higher levels of participation in decision-making, there are also higher levels of participation in co-production types of activities. More regular contact between school and home, through meetings and written communication, is shown to make a difference.

SCHOOLWIDE RECOGNITION OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS:
When schools publicly honor academic achievement and stress its importance, students are encouraged to adopt similar norms and values.

Exhibit 1
Organizational/Structural and Process Variables
Related to Effective Schools
(Continued)

MAXIMIZED LEARNING TIME:
Effective schools devote greater portions of the school day and of each class period to active teaching in academic areas; class periods are free of interruptions and disorder; instructional time is protected.

DISTRICT SUPPORT:
Few significant changes can be realized without district support. The primary role of district-level leadership is guiding and helping, through identifying the purpose of the school as reflected in policy statements and district goals.

Process Variables

COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND COLLEGIAL RELATIONSHIPS:
Change attempts are more successful when teachers and administrators work together. Collegiality breaks down barriers between departments and among teachers and administrators. It encourages the kind of intellectual sharing that can lead to consensus, and it promotes feelings of unity and commonality among the staff.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY:
The feeling of being a part of a supportive community contributes to reduced alienation and increased performance on the part of both teachers and students. Schools can create a sense of community through use of ceremony, symbols, and rules.

CLEAR GOALS AND HIGH EXPECTATIONS COMMONLY SHARED:
Schools whose staff agree on their goals (e.g., academic achievement) and expectations (e.g., work and achievement expected of all students) are more likely to succeed because their energy and efforts are channeled toward a mutually agreed upon purpose. High expectations for work and achievement also characterize successful schools

ORDER AND DISCIPLINE:
An environment which is quiet, safe, and non-distracting promotes learning. Clear, reasonable rules which are fairly and consistently enforced reduce behavior problems and promote pride and responsibility in the school community. Order and discipline should be predicated on rewards rather than punishment.

Excellence Movement

The Excellence Movement also muscled its way onstage between 1980 and 1983, emboldened by political changes and spurred by threats of international business competition, this top-down educational reform campaign threatened to sweep aside the more modest Effective Schools Movement. There was cause for concern.

While the Effective Schools Movement and the Excellence Movement share some similarities, there are important differences between the two that are well described by Zerchykor (1985). As noted by Zerchykor, the two movements are similar in that each: (a) is fundamentally a positive effort to improve schools, each assuming that schools not only should but can do better; (b) is concerned with student outcomes; (c) has resulted in models for increasing school effectiveness that call for making them more orderly and better focused on academics; and (d) criticizes past schooling for less than adequate expectations for student learning.

Zerchykor, R. (1985). *A citizen's notebook for effective schools.* Boston, MA: The Institute for Responsive Education.

But the differences are significant. The Excellence Movement has focused on the secondary level, while the Effective Schools Movement has focused primarily on the elementary level. The Effective Schools Movement has targeted basic skills, usually defined as elementary reading and mathematics. The Excellence Movement, on the other hand, emphasizes higher-order skills and competencies and mastery of curricula above and beyond basic skills and minimum competencies. The Excellence Movement challenges schools to nurture the "best-and-the-brightest," encouraging schools to tighten standards, make curriculum more demanding, increase average achievement scores, and have students score higher on aptitude tests. But such schools could be ineffective for some students, contrasting sharply with the Effective Schools Movement's goal of success for all.

In short, the Effective Schools Movement has an equity dimension, the Excellence Movement apparently does not. In a world of finite resources, schools may have to make some choices about how to best use their resources for the good of their communities and society. For example, policymakers may have to decide whether to spend school

resources on helping all primary grade students master reading skills, or to allocate those resources to ensure that outstanding older students have opportunities to become national or world leaders in science and mathematics. The debate penetrates to the very heart of the nation's fundamental vision of public education.

While one cannot be completely certain, amidst the dust and clamor of the battle, the Effective Schools Movement appears to be surviving – even flourishing. A number of state departments of education, for example, have set in place reform initiatives based specifically on the effective teaching and effective schools research (Odden, 1985). There is even evidence that the Excellence Movement is falling back. There is growing realization at the national level, for example, that the economic and social good of the country cannot be served if a burgeoning population of minority students is left behind (Teske, 1987).

Odden, A. (1985). State level policies and practices supporting effective school management and classroom instruction. In R. M. J. Kyle (Ed.), *Reaching for excellence: An effective schools sourcebook* (pp. 131-142). Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office.

Teske, S. (1987, June 17). Minority students portrayed as key to nation's economic success. *Education Daily*, p. 2.

1983-Present

The current period in our history began with a devastating loss to the Effective Schools Movement but has emerged as an exciting and productive era.

Loss of a Leader, Gain of a Saint

The death of Ron Edmonds from a heart attack in the summer of 1983 devastated the Effective Schools Movement for a period and then provided an emotional rallying point for consolidation and a fresh assault on school improvement. As Lezotte (1986) explained:

> First, many of us lost a personal and professional friend; second, the Movement lost a great communicator; and, third, the Movement, much to the credit of his discerning wisdom and active involvement, had begun to be institutionalized. Consequently, just as new roles and processes were evolving, most of us involved in the research and practice found ourselves carrying forward a workload of gigantic proportions, including both research and school improvement, while operating in what might be appropriately called, a 'loose' network of collaboration. ...We found the energy to go forward, propelled in no small measure by the inspiration of Ron Edmonds' work and personhood. (p. 9)

The Movement had lost a leader, but in the end it gained a patron saint and others stepped in to fill new leadership roles. Indications are that the leadership void has been filled, as the Movement has made significant strides since 1983.

National Research Centers

The U.S. Office of Education funded in 1985 two Research and Development Centers charged with responsibility for conducting basic research on and supporting development of effective schools at the elementary/middle and secondary levels. The Center for Effective Elementary and Middle Schools at Johns Hopkins University includes in its mission the development and evaluation of specific strategies to help schools implement effective research-based school and classroom practices. The Center on Effective Secondary Schools at the University of Wisconsin focuses on learning how to improve the achievement of all students, with special attention to the needs of disadvantaged and less successful students. Whether or not these centers will pursue the same line of research and/or philosophy that characterized the seminal studies of exceptional schools remains to be seen.

Development of Resources

A wealth of resources and materials, such as handbooks, guides, and instruments have been developed to assist people in understanding and implementing effective schools concepts. Several sourcebooks are now available to assist school personnel in identifying extant resources (e.g., Kyle, 1985; Mace-Matluck, 1986a, 1986b; Fleming & Buckles 1987).

The professional journals, such as the *Phi Delta Kappan* and *Educational Leadership*, are replete with articles on aspects of the Effective Schools Movement, and new books on the subject go on the market each day (e.g., Carlson & Ducharme, 1987).

Additionally, there is a growing acceptance of a broader definition of the "effective school literature" and a convergence of the major bodies of literature that form the knowledge base for school improvement -- particularly the "school effects" and the "teacher effects" research.

Kyle, R. M. J. (Ed.). (1985). *Reaching for excellence: An effective schools sourcebook.* Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office.

Fleming, D.S., & Buckles, C. (1987) *Implementing school improvement plans: A directory of research-based tools.* Andover, MA: Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands.

Carlson, R. V., & Ducharme, E. R. (Eds.). (1987). *School improvement - theory and practice: A book of readings.* Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Finally, a process model of school improvement based on the effective schools research has evolved and is being implemented, with the predictable array of variations. The basis for the generic model was put forth by Edmonds and was extended and refined by other researchers and practitioners after him.

The prospects for the future of the Effective Schools Movement look bright at this time, but a number of questions and concerns continue to linger, or are emerging in educational discourse. Some of the more significant of these are presented below.

Questions and Concerns

Major concern. The research methodologies employed in the "school effect" studies leave much to be desired (Purkey & Smith, 1983; Good & Brophy, 1986). Some of the weaknesses in these studies were alluded to above.

Questions. Cuban (1987), Good & Brophy (1986), and others have posed a number of questions that represent the kinds of concerns often expressed by researchers and practitioners alike:

1. Most studies have examined only student academic achievement as an indicator of school effectiveness. Is this concept of effectiveness too narrow?

2. Most of the research has been limited to elementary schools. Can the findings of this research be applied successfully to secondary schools whose organization and structure differ from that of the elementary school?

3. Methodologically similar studies differ in their definitions of terms and concepts (e.g., "climate," "instructional leadership," "high expectations"). While appearing to be consistent in their findings, does the lack of agreement of definition of terms and concepts dilute the consistency of the findings?

Good, T. L., & Brophy, J. E. (1986). School effects. In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching*, third edition (pp. 570-602). New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Cuban, L. (1987). Transforming the frog into a prince: Effective schools research, policy, and practice at the district level. In R. V. Carlson & E. R. Ducharme (Eds.), *School improvement - theory and practice: A book of readings* (pp. 993-1029). Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

4. The individual school is viewed as the unit of change. Has sufficient attention been given to the vitally important role of district leadership in reform efforts?

5. Available evidence does not provide generalizable information about the stability of effective schools. Why do some schools achieve highly one year but not the next year? If strong principal leadership is an important variable in school achievement, how and why does achievement vary from year to year? (Good & Brophy, 1986, p. 587).

6. Schools and teachers are important but not exclusive factors in facilitating students' learning. Does the effective schools research give sufficient attention to the role of students, parents, and community members in establishing and maintaining good schools?

7. Most of the research attempting to associate school effects with student learning is correlational. Effective schools research cannot claim that any set of correlates (or school characteristics) cause a school to be "instructionally effective." The research simply claims that where certain characteristics exist, the schools are "effectively teaching" all children. Can this research be used with confidence to guide school improvement? If so, how?

Certainly, there remains a number of other unanswered questions. Cuban (1987) succinctly and metaphorically provides food for thought:

> No one knows how to grow effective schools. None of the richly detailed descriptions of high performers can serve as a blueprint for teachers, principals, or superintendents who seek to improve academic achievement. Constructing a positive, enduring school climate remains beyond the planner's pen. Telling the principals what to say and do in order to boost teacher expectations of students or to renovate a marginal faculty into one with espirit de corps remains beyond the current expertise of superintendents or professors. Road signs exist, but no maps are yet for sale. (pp. 995-996)

Perhaps this is, indeed, where we are in the Effective Schools Movement -- the course has been roughly charted and some signs have been posted. Now it remains for those who believe the course has something to offer to follow it out and to draw maps that will guide others more precisely. Any number of school improvement projects around the country are currently putting some of the lines of the map in place.